

December 2, 2009

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*Ensuring environmental and  
economic prosperity for the Great  
Lakes-St. Lawrence region through  
communications, policy research and  
development, and advocacy.*

Governor Pat Quinn  
Office of the Governor  
207 State House  
Springfield, IL 62702

Dear Governor Quinn:

On behalf of the undersigned member states and provinces of the Great Lakes Commission, we offer our full support for the emergency actions the State of Illinois plans to take to protect the Great Lakes from Asian carp. These actions include the application of rotenone to a segment of the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal (CSSC) when the electric dispersal barrier (Barrier IIA) is shut down for maintenance. We believe that Illinois' approach is being taken in the best interest of the health of the ecosystem due to the unprecedented danger that an invasion by Asian carp poses to the Great Lakes region. This threat is heightened by the alarming recent discovery of carp DNA upstream of the dispersal barrier.

Commission members recognize that the planned responses are both measured and grounded in the best available scientific information. First, the presence of carp DNA indicates that the threat is real and demands a response. Second, the actions planned are appropriate and are calculated to minimize undesirable impacts on water quality and life in the CSSC. We understand that this includes electro-fishing and selective use of chemicals to attempt to locate carp, electro-fishing to remove and relocate some non-target fish prior to chemical treatment and restocking with game fish after the treatment.


According to experts, carp DNA has been detected within one mile downstream from the electric dispersal barrier system in the CSSC (August 2009), and approximately eight miles from Lake Michigan in the Cal-Sag Channel (October 2009). These new findings underscore the urgency in taking immediate action to prevent further migration of Asian carp toward Lake Michigan. When Barrier IIA is shut down in December for maintenance, only a temporary demonstration barrier will be left to prevent migration of live fish to the Great Lakes. Further, the potential for flooding could increase the threat of invasion by allowing carp in the Des Plaines River to spill into the CSSC. The urgency of this scenario requires that Illinois, in partnership with the federal governments of the United States and Canada as well as the other Great Lakes states and provinces, be prepared to implement a unified, science-based response plan to prevent escape into Lake Michigan. The time to act is now.

While immediate aggressive action must be taken to prevent the Asian carp from invading the Great Lakes, Commission members recognize that a long term solution is needed. We pledge to work with you to encourage the federal government to

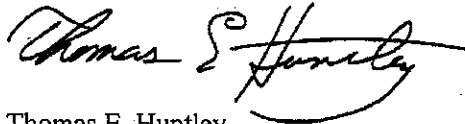
accelerate completion of Barrier IIB, to provide a sound back-up. We also pledge to work with you to encourage the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to accelerate its study of permanent solutions to invasive species migration between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River System.

Like you, we are determined to protect our valuable Great Lakes commercial and recreational fishery. As you know, in addition to this statement of support, many of our member state and provincial agencies have already pledged financial and material support for the emergency response plan. We also recognize with appreciation the efforts of the dedicated team from state government you have assembled with a mission to ensure that no undesirable fish escape on their watch. If there is anything else we can do to support your efforts, please do not hesitate to contact Commission Executive Director Tim Eder.

Sincerely,



David Phippen  
Office of Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels



Thomas E. Huntley  
Minnesota State Representative



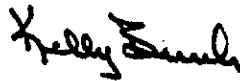
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Government of Ontario



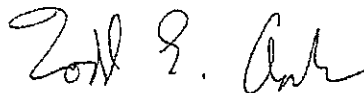
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